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Unity Sunday School Lessons, No. XXII

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Six Years in Sunday School

Each Year Two Courses

(1) A Study of Religion (2) A Study of Duties

The Ethics of School Life

By Juniata Stafford

SECOND YEAR IN THE STUDY OF DUTIES

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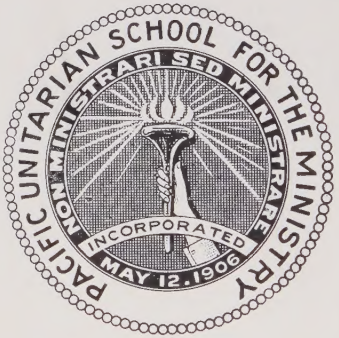

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THE GIFT OF

UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY

OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY 1962

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PREFACE.

Teachers:—It would be almost impossible to write a series of lessons in *The School Life* that exactly suited all teachers or fitted all kinds of schools. Many teachers would prefer less of detail, perhaps, than these lessons contain; but I thought it well for me to keep constantly in mind while writing the *child*, the *public* schools of our cities and towns, and the *country* schools whose teachers cannot have the benefit of Teachers' Meetings or frequent Institutes.

Therefore, will each one please *choose* from each lesson that which meets your own needs, and adapt it to them? Do not try to give it all, for all of each lesson does not belong to any one class, teacher or school.

I would suggest that you prepare yourselves at home beforehand, by carefully choosing and adapting to your class, writing your outline on a slip of paper with whatever of your practical illustration you care or need to add; and then, *leave the lesson book at home.* This will give *your* work definite form and value without the temptation to add something less relevant. The book should never be in the hands of any but teachers or the most advanced pupils. Also, please make a great effort to have your pupils commit to memory the "texts" at the head of the lessons, and the helpful quotations occasionally inserted. They will be of value all through life, if thoroughly learned in these impressionable years.

Hoping these lessons will prove to be of practical help to you all, believe me,

Cordially yours,

JUNIATA STAFFORD.

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I.

SCHOOL.

"I went to school to-day!"
—Where did you go?
How did you go?
And what did you see by the way?

"I came from school to-day!"
—How did you come?
The same did you come,
As you were when you went away?

Choose and adapt.

(1) **A Place.**—When you go to school, must you go to a school-*house?* What is a school-house like? A *country* school-house? A *city* school-house? Can you go to school in a room in any kind of a building? Out of doors? What is a school-ship? A plain, bare school-house without many things to work with, and a fine one with every supply—what difference *should* it make in your work? *Take* advantage, or *make advantages?* Does successful work lie in the *surroundings* or in *you?* Great men and *log school-houses.* Great men and *fine colleges.*

(2) **The Pupils.**—Can a "school" be quiet, or good, or troublesome? Can a "school" do well? Can a "school" be dismissed, or go out to walk, or go on a picnic? The school-house cannot do this — what else then, besides a *place* is a school? How many does it take to make a school?

(3) **Schooling.**—The dictionary says "Schooling:

Instruction, education." Are there any other lessons to be learned than those in *books?* What is to be educated beside your *mind?* Your *heart?* Your *hand?* Your *tongue?* Who shall do it? Schooling means training—who shall be the "*trainer?*"

(4) **The World a School.**—Can you get education anywhere else besides in school? Lessons in Nature—where? Lessons in business—where? Lessons in work and trades of all kinds—where? Lessons in goodness, generosity, justice—where?

> "The World . . .
> Best *school* of best experience."—*Milton.*

(5) **For the Older Classes.**—*A School.* (1) The disciples or followers of a teacher. (2) Those who accept the same teaching—a sect or denomination in philosophy, theology, science, art, etc. (3) The system of doctrine as delivered by particular teachers: as, the Socratic school of philosophy, the Dutch school of painting, the various schools of medicine.

When do our school-days really end—with youth? With time? Can we be pupil and teacher, too? Is what we get in 'school" ours "to keep" or what shall we do with it?

"She had lacked much of opportunity, but she had also made *good use* of a little."

"To whom much is given, of him is much required."

II.

SCHOOL AND HOME.

A piece of home, and a piece of school,
And a piece of out door pleasure,
Are enough to make us say, at night,
"The day has brought golden treasure."

Choose and adapt.

(1) **We Belong to Both.**—*School* is to help us to be good and intelligent members of a family—does it belong to our home life?

Home is to help us to do our duty outside as well as within it—does home belong to school? Can the teacher say of you, "That child has had good training at home: I can tell it at once?" Can your mother say, "How much school is doing for my child?"

(2) **School Brought Home.**—How *much* shall we bring? Lessons to learn? Papers with good marks? Papers with poor marks or mistakes? If the latter, what for? Complaints of teachers? *Tell* of some kind word of hers, or just take it as a matter of course and *say nothing of it?* What shall we bring home about our schoolmates? Shall we bring *them* home, and how and when?

(3) **Home Time and Work.**—Shall school work be our only work? Shall it excuse us from home duties? Should we often allow ourselves to say, "Oh, I can't do that now, I want to study!" Studying ***hard*** shortens the time needed on a lesson—can we thus *win* time

to "help mother?" Do we hinder her when we leave books and papers about? Does order in all matters *save* time or *take* time? Have you *tried* both ways?

(4) **Home Hours.**—Students *need* sleep—what time do you go to bed? Is your necessary studying done *early* in the evening, or do you then "dawdle," and afterwards sit up late? What time do you *get up*—time enough to get breakfast easily, do a little studying or house work, and go off to school in good order and good time? Or do you stay in bed *to the last minute*, snatch a little breakfast, "grab" your hat and books, and reach school barely in time, nervous and cross?

The pleasure of *home*, *school* and *yourself*, depend on how you manage your hours—is good management *worth while?*

(5) **An Equivalent.**—*Who* gives you opportunities for an education? It is a great privilege. Can you give any *return*? What brings greatest pleasure to your parents in your school work? Will you be able to make them feel *fully* repaid if you do your *best*? Who rejoices over a good record? Your parents, your teacher, yourself. *Earn* it, then, and *pay your debts.*

(6) **For Older Classes.**—*High Schools* Does "being in the High School" make you a more important personage? Do your home obligations grow less or greater as you advance in school life? Do you feel "superior" to the younger members of the family, or more able to give them help and encouragement?

If out of school, should home life exclude all study? Are you "through?"

Education. Are you interested in the educational matters of your town, state, and country? Are they nothing to you after you leave school? There is noble work to be done in the educational cause—will you help? Think out some of the ways.

III.

THE TEACHER.

My teacher is a guide;
I need one, for the world is wide,
And paths divide;
How can I know which path to choose,
If guides and chart I dare refuse?

My teacher is a friend:
From school's beginning to life's end,
Her aid she'll lend:
She gives me what I use, now, here,
And helps to make the future clear.

Choose and adapt.

(1) The Head of the School.—Who is the "*head*" of the school—you, or the teacher? Will you *let* her be the head? If she guides will you *be guided?* Will you follow *her* plans or *your own?* *Test* them or *thwart* them?

(2) **What the Teacher Stands For.**—First, *knowledge:* she knows what you wish to know.—She got this knowledge by long, hard work; she gives it to you by hard and careful work; you can get it only in the same way. Second, *for the present time:* it has taken all the ages to get to *now* in school work, all the thinking, working, experimenting, hoping. You are getting the *best* that came out of all this—who gives it to you?

Third, *for the future time:* what she gives you now, you will use in the future. You and she, *together*, *shape* the future—*from* her, *through* you, *to* others. Keep the chain strong and bright.

(3) **Teaching and Discipline.**—Two things go to make up a good school-teaching and discipline, or order: who does the first? Who *should* do the second? For whose sake should order be kept, *yours* or the *teacher's?* The better the school, the better for *whom?*

Disorder hurts whom—the teacher? Yes. As much as it hurts you? It hurts the teacher now: it hurts you *only* now? The teacher is *paid* for teaching and keeping good order—can you *prevent* her *earning* her money? Can you *help* her? Can you become a "partner" in this "concern?" If you do, who has the "profits"—the teacher only? Will you form an "opposition partnership" with laziness, mischief, dishonesty, some bad or mean school-mate? You can, a strong one too, will it "pay?"

(4) **Criticism and Reproof.**—Who should do the criticising in a school? Why? Do *age* and *experience* help one to judge more *correctly?* *Who* has

age and experience in *your* school? If you "knew it all" would you *need a teacher?* How do you take reproof—in a manly, womanly way, and try not to deserve it again? In an angry, childish way, that *shows you more in the wrong* than perhaps the teacher thought you were? Which is the better way for you *and* the teacher.

(5) **Your Friend.**—A good *friend* is your teacher: she works with and for you, is *glad* when you *do well*, *sad* when you do *poorly*, *earnest* for your *present* good, *hopeful* for your *future*. Are you *her* friend? Do you trust her and *show* her your trust, gratitude, good will? Do you realize that she can be tired, sick or mistaken and in need of your help—of a *friend's* help? Will you give what you *can?*

(6) **For Older Classes.**—Speak of such teachers as Dr. Arnold. "I, Louis Agassiz, Teacher." Read the tributes of Marcus Aurelius to his various teachers, specifying what he received from each. The teacher is a great power in the world.

IV.

STUDY.

"Well begun" may be "half done,"
But beginning is not ending;
Great successes ne'er are won
By only wishing and intending.
"Start" is good, but "stay" is better;
"Start," alone, ne'er won a race;
"Start and stick" is sure prize-getter:
"Staying powers" take foremost place.

Choose and adapt.

(1) **The Chief End of Study.**—*Why* do you study? First, that you may *know*. "Knowledge is power:" can you use this power if you do not have it? Can you drive a nail if you have no hammer? Second, to *strengthen your mind*. If you let your hand hang down at your side and *never* use it, what will happen? What if you never *use* your *mind?* If you let a *field* go *without cultivation*, and grow just as it pleases, what will it be like? What if you do the *same* with your mind? Can the mind ever do *nothing?* Can you remember *everything* you ever learn? Are the things you study, learn and in time *forget* of any use to you? If you swing dumb bells, what do you do it for—that you may swing dumb bells all your life, or that your muscles may become stronger for other work? Can *study* do the same for your *mind?* Can *anything else* do it?

(2) **Where to Study:** In school? Yes. At home? Can you get *all* of your lessons *well* at school? If so,

that is the place. If not, consult your teacher and your mother. Should you study while walking—from the book, I mean? Should you study from the book while riding? Reasons for and against. Will it be all right to repeat a sentence or a rule, as you walk or ride, to fix it in memory? Should you lie in bed and study? The light should fall on your work, not on your eyes. Does it pay to be careful in these ways?

(3) **How to Study.**—"Put your mind on it"—what does "on it" mean? Can you *put* your mind where you please? Can you read a thing over and over and not know a bit of what you are reading? Is that *study?* Did *you* ever do it and *call* it study? "I studied *at* it"—what does that mean?

Understanding—can you have it the *first* time you read over a lesson if you try hard? Not always? Is it a great help when you do? What prevents, *often*, —the difficulty of the lesson, or the way you use your mind? Be *honest* with *yourself* in answering this. If you do not understand at first, may you give up? How do you feel when you give up? How when you work hard and *conquer?* Which is *mind-strengthening?* "Over and over again"—does that belong to study?

(4) **Difficulties.**—Is it always easy to study? Sometimes it is—must you wait only for *such* times? Can you study in a noise? Out of doors? In company? Can you *put* your mind on your lesson? It is hard? Yes; but if there is no opportunity to study elsewhere just then, *can* you do it? If the sitting-room is the only room for you to sit in and study, should the rest of the family be obliged to refrain from talking? You

would rather do something else than study? What if you *do* it? A poor lesson? An unsound brick in your building? Who knows when this failure may count against you? You alone?

(5) **A Conscience in Study.**—You have a mind—is it your *duty* to use it well? There is good work to do in the world—will you do some of it? *Can* you, if you are not *fitted* for it? Can you *grow* to higher kind of work? What does conscience have to do with study?

(6) **For Older Classes.** Is it ever the right thing to do to commit a lesson to memory that you do not understand? Is it best to learn a rule or definition "word for word," or to give the idea correctly in your own words? "Study to please;" "Study to be quiet;" "Study into it;" "Study by the way;"—What do these mean?

V.

PLAY.

Play for fun, and play for good,
And play with all your might;
If when, and where, and how you should,
Your play will be all right.

Choose and adapt.

(1) **Your Right.**—Children sometimes say, "I have a *right* to play!" So they have—why? First, be-

cause *it is natural*—one of the ways nature takes to make you grow, in body and mind. Can you use both? Can *idiots* play? Can a boy, who cannot walk, play? A blind boy? A dumb boy? Is play all of one kind? Girls' play? Boys' play? Play in different countries? Second, *it is a rest.* From what? Why do you need to rest? *Could* you work always without play? *Should* you play always without work? Third, *it is sociable.* Study must be done alone—that is, each one must study for himself. Play *takes in others.* It brings out the *cheerful* side of us: is it *play* if it brings out crossness or gloom? Can you study with another who cannot speak your language? Can you *play* with him?

(2) **The Play-Ground a School.**—What do you learn there? New games? How to play old ones better? To see quickly? To act quickly? To depend on your best faculties? To cultivate your poorer ones? What of *counting* games? Only *earnest work* pays—how about play? Do *lazy* players win or have fun? Do their companions like to have them play? Only *honest work* pays—what of play? Is it "fun" to cheat? Is it "fun" to be cheated? How do you treat the property of others when you play? Is "fun" ever a reason for defacing or injuring property? If you see, anywhere, markings with chalk, or pencil that are wrong or indecent will you not remove them, for the sake of others? Bad habits spread: *you* can help prevent their spreading. Can you learn in play to be brave, kind and generous? Are these *lessons?* Can you "get them?" What do you think of the boy or girl who does *not* get them?

(3) **The Golden Rule of Play.**—"No fun unless

it is fun on *both* sides," (Horace Mann.) Are you having fun that *teases* or *hurts* another? Put yourself in his place. Can that other be a dog, or any other animal? Æsop's fable of the boy stoning the frogs. Theodore Parker and the turtle. Watch animals at play with each other and notice if you ever see any meanness. Should you expect the others always to play what *you* like? Do you ever play what you do *not* like because some one else likes it? If you play what you do not like *hard*, will you like it any better? What has *good nature* to do with play? How do you treat the younger boys and girls on the play ground? Do you play, in all ways, as you wish others to play with you?

(4) **For Older Classes.**—"Play—a game, an amusement, anything done for diversion," says the dictionary. Do children only play? If not, does play "grow with our growth," or only change? Have we gone forward to higher things when we play cards for money, go to dog fights, cock fights, bull fights, to a low or vulgar play? Can you prevent these things from going on in the community? "If I stay away others will go: I'm only *one* man!" *Each* man is *only one man*, and he is a power for evil or good. A *power* for good —take that for the keynote of your "*play*."

VI.

SCHOOL-MATES.

"That which is not good for the swarm, neither is it good for the bee."—*Marcus Aurelius.*

"The music that can deepest reach,
And cure all ill, is cordial speech.—*Emerson.*

Choose and adapt.

(1) **Companions Educate Us.**—Schoolmates are a part of school—are they a pleasant part? What do we get *from* them? They talk—what do they talk *about?* How do *we* talk back? They let us know a good many of their thoughts—are they the right sort of thoughts? What they say and think sets *us* to thinking—is it on the *right lines?* Does it help us up or pull us down? Could we tell it at home or would we rather not? *Can* we be with our schoolmates and *not* be influenced by them? How do they behave? Are their manners as good or better than ours, and should either be the standard? Thinking, talking, manners, in these three ways our schoolmates cannot help partly educating us. Is it good or bad education in *your* school?

(2) **Your Standard.**—*You* are educating some one else by *your* way of thinking, talking, behaving—how? Shall you *change* your standard according to your *present* associates? Will you "go up" a little if the set is good? You ought to, but will you also "come down" a little if the set is *not good?* Will they *like* you better—*really* better? What do

you gain *if they do?* Can you *brace* yourself against evil influence, and have good resolutions and be true to them while you are *young?* *If you do* not, believe me, you will not be apt nor *so able* to do so when you are older. Can you "raise the standard" in *your* school? Is it easy? Can you stand coaxing, threatening, ridicule, and *stand firm?* The one question to ask about anything is, is it right? Have you the courage to act on the right side? There is a right and wrong side in very small things. George Eliot says —"The reward of doing one good deed is the added *power* to do *the next.*"

(3) **Your Part Towards Others.**—(*a*) Borrowing and lending: is it well to borrow books, paper, pencil, erasers or any school "tool" from your mates? If you are *careful*, could you always have your "tools" in order? If by any accident, you are *obliged* to borrow, should you be *careless* about returning it because, "Oh, it's such a *little* thing, he would be *mean* to be particular about my giving *that* back!"

Should you *lend?* There is a rule of *kindness* in such matters—a rule of *justice*, too—can you *use* both? If you *always* lend whenever anybody asks you, is it always *kind* or *good for the one you lend to*, or *just* towards those who *supply your things?* If you *never* lend, because everybody *should* have his things in order, as *you* do, will it not often be *mean* and show a feeling of self-righteousness?

(*b*) *Helping with Lessons*—To what extent may you and your school-mates "help" each other in lessons? May one *do* the work and then *show the other how?* Is it kind to let a mate copy your examples, transla-

tion, parsing or definitions? You had better ask your teacher just what you may do about giving or getting help and then *do as she says* and your *very best*, no matter what "marks" *you* get, nor how "mean" *your companions* may think you are.

(4) "Getting Even."—There are bad boys and girls in every school—these are sure to do mean and tricky things to one who will not lower his standard, and do as *they* wish. Sometimes a good boy or girl gets "mad" at a friend and does something mean to "show him." Shall we "have our revenge?" Shall we do an equally mean, harmful thing to "get even?" Marcus Aurelius says, "The *best* way of *avenging* thyself is not to become *like* the wrong doer."

For Older Classes.—Character and not station, wealth or clothes should influence our choice of intimates amongst our school-mates. It is not always desirable to be friendly with the "leader" in a school. Why? Is the majority always in the right? Can you afford to be very unpopular if you are in the right? Is it wise to be neutral when there is a decided right and wrong?

VII.

BRIGHTNESS AND DULLNESS.

"Not how much talent have I, but how much *will* to *use* the talent I have, is the main question. Not how much do I know, but how much do I *do* with what I know?"—*W. C. Gannett.*

Choose and Adapt.

Begin with parable of The Talents, Matt. XXV, 14-30.

(1) **Your Talent.**—That means your mental power or ability. Where did you get it? It took *generations* of people and *ages* of *time* to get to *you* and *your mind*—is it *worth taking care of?* You are bright perhaps—are you to take credit to *yourself* for that? Perhaps you are dull—are you to *blame* yourself or others, and *do nothing* about it? What will you do with your *brightness?* It *can* grow dull just as a piece of silver laid away and never used. It *can* be kept bright as the money can—*how?* What will you do with your *dullness*, for it is yours to do *something* with? If you cannot learn two pages, can you learn one? If you cannot learn a lesson in *one* hour, will you not *take two?* Are you as dull *this* year as you were *last* in spite of *hard, faithful work?* No; you *cannot* be—let that be your comfort. *Keep on working.* Do you know the story of the hare and the tortoise? If only the dull ones would *keep steadily on;* if only the bright ones would *not* "let up," what would it do for the world?

(2) **How Brightness is Dulled.**—Bright boys and girls do not always grow into useful men and women: why? They are spoiled:

(*a*) *By Self-conceit:* if you are thinking of the praise of friends, or how much smarter you are than others, will you be likely to think you must do your very best? Will you not, rather, desire to "show off" on some particular occasion, and "just get along" at other times?

(*b*) *By Shallowness:* when it is easy to do "pretty well," it is easy to think that "pretty well" will do. Will it? The mind *grows* only by use—will you dwarf your mind by using it only partly or feebly?

(*c*) *By Idleness*—If you can get your lessons in a little time, will you keep putting them off and spend the rest of the time in idleness? If you *have* the time to use as you choose, can you add to the value of the lesson by learning some outside matter that relates to it? If some one else *needs* all your "spare" time should you idle it away *on your lessons?*

(3) **How Dullness is Brightened.**—Talent is often only great industry; can you "cultivate" talent? If *time* and *hard work* will accomplish a task, will you *take* time and *give* hard work? Will you do it *every* day? Cheerfulness helps. Shall you say, I'll keep at this lesson, but I don't believe I'll *ever* get it!" or "'Never is a long day,' and it will not be *my* day for *this* lesson!" Tell the story of the Discontented Pendulum. Dull boys and girls often make bright men and women (Sir Walter Scott and Liebig were called "boobies" at school) but they have to work *steadily* for it. "*Slow* but *sure.*"

(4) **The World's Needs.**—What sort of talent does

the world need? Every sort. Quick minds for emergencies, steady minds for long strains, minds trained to do only *one* thing well; minds that can *readily* do a *good many things*, leading minds, *following* minds, commanding minds, minds that can promptly obey, those that can invent, others that can carry out the ideas of another. *Any* talent well cultivated has its use in the world. The world needs *your* talent *whatever* it is. What is it? Are you making the very most of it? Parable of the Talents, Matt. XXV, 14-30.

For Older Classes.—*Late opportunity.* If you have not had early opportunities for education, can you do anything late in life? It will not be as easy—should that deter you from trying? *Night* schools—do they meet your needs? *Public libraries* and *reading-rooms*, do you *use* them? *Need* you remain ignorant? If you are fitted for only humble, plain work, can you, by pursuing persistently one line of study, fit yourself to do a higher kind, or the same kind more skillfully? Are you ever "too old to learn?" Is there a closed door to new knowledge because you are no longer young? Michael Angelo at 80 turning to make an architect of himself.

Other illustrations. You are not too old, at any time to "break new ground" and plant seed, *if you will.* The ability of mature years is often found to be greater than that of youth, *when fully tested.*

VIII.

READING AND OUTSIDE HELPS.

"Reading maketh a full man."—*Bacon.*

"Keeping thy divine part pure as if thou shouldst be bound to give it back immediately."—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Choose and adapt.

(1) **What do You Read For?** First, most of you read for "*fun*"—is it *good* "fun?" Then, all right. Is *all* your reading for fun? Then, only *half* right. Second, *to learn about something not in your school books.* Is it something *worth* learning? Is it *true?* If you wish to learn about Africa, for instance, will it make any difference *which* book about Africa you read? Third, *to help with your lessons.* School books give only a *little* of each subject: if you wish to get *more* what must you do?

(2) **Choice of Books.**—Can you choose a book *alone?* If a hundred books are before you, *how* will you know which one to choose? Does your mother, father or teacher know any better than you? All the boys and girls are reading a book and so you read it? How did *they* know how to choose? Do you care to ask your mother or teacher if *that* book is good for you to read? Do you get books from a library? Did you ever ask the *librarian* for any help in choosing? She is one of the best of choosers, for that is part of her business. What is "chaff"? Grain? Is there much "chaff" in books? Do you want it? *You*

cannot tell the "grain" by looking at the book cover —will you not wisely ask help in finding it?

(3) **Food and Poison.**—If your mind is to grow it needs *food*—all of one kind? The body thrives best on bread, meat, vegetables, fruit and good milk—are there *kinds of reading* that correspond to these? You may eat *too little* to keep up your strength and growth —can you read too little for the *mind's* growth? Can you eat too much of even the best kinds of food? What does over-eating do? Can you over-do reading? If you read too much and too hastily, if you "cram" the results will be (1) that you will not remember things *correctly* (2) that you will forget *most* of what you read. (3) that you will "skim over" a book and never get at its *real worth* at all (4) that you will spend in reading time that should be spent in exercise of work or play. A good rule: learn your lessons *thoroughly*, then read what is worth while, and as much as you can *reasonably. Reasonably* —what does that mean?

Can you *poison* the mind? Can you roll a snowball in the mud and keep it *white?* If once it becomes muddy can you *make it white again?* There are poisonous and muddy books and papers; most of them are cheap; some of them are only a *little* poisonous or muddy. Your only safety lies in not choosing for yourself. You never can wholly undo what you do for yourself in reading a book bad in the least degree. "Skim milk" reading — what is it? What does it do? If you weaken the mind with books that are "not bad" but as certainly not "good," can the mind do proper work? A weakened mind easily yields to

harmful things, and is made strong again *with difficulty*. "Skim milk" reading is one of the worst kinds.

(4) **Great Books.**—There are some great books that are a help, an incentive to good and that leave us unsatisfied to take anything but the best. The mind grows a great deal in reading even one such book slowly and well. Some of the greatest minds have had only a few books in childhood, but they read them *well*—can you take a lesson from that?

(5) **For Older Classes.**—If you should read every hour of all your life, you could read only a small part of the books of the world—does *how much* you read make you a "full man?" Since you can read so little what will the little be? Reading in the line of your work *must* be done for success; you will grow one-sided if that is *all*—can you be too careful about choice and division in reading?

Teachers:—Prepare yourselves as thoroughly as you can to tell a child just what book to read if he comes and asks you. Question him closely first and then choose, deliberately, according to his needs.

Read: Emerson's *Essay on Books.*

Plutarch's *Essay on Reading.*

Horace Mann's Life. by Mary Mann.

Consult: *One Hundred Choice Books.* Lubbock. (American Edition.)

Putnam's Handy Vol. Series—"*Good Reading.*"

Literary Landmarks—Mary E. Burt.

Ten Great Novels—C. H. Kerr (Publisher.)

IX.

SCHOOL HONOR.

"No longer talk about the kind of man a good man ought to be, but be such."

"If it is not right, do not do it; if it is not true do not say it." *Marcus Aurelius.*

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part—there all the honor lies."—*Pope.*

Choose and adapt.

(1) **"On Honor."**—Do you know of any grander motto for school-life than that? What does honor mean? *Trustworthiness.* Can it be part of *every* thing you do? If you *leave it out* of any word or act, what is your word or act *worth?*

(2) **School Honor.**—Is it different from any *other kind* of honor? Home, school, the world—each brings its different set of actions, should the same honor run through each? Is school-life made up of big or little things? Shall you wait for a big one in which to show how "honorable" you can be—what a hero? If you have not learned how to be honorable in little things, will you have any honor to be a hero with?

(3) **Commonplaces of Honor.**—These school gives you. Let us look into them: (*a*) Can you be trusted with the *property of others?* Are the desk, the black board, books of reference and other school "properties *yours?* Have you the right to *abuse* them? Have you the rightful privilege to cut or write your name or *anything else* on fences, steps or

out-buildings of the school? Can you help keep these clean (in two senses)? Are persons who misuse public property *anywhere* honorable? Can you be trusted to carry or "come across" a note, a letter, a parcel or lunch basket without peeping into it? Do you ever help yourself, without asking, to your schoolmate's little things—his pencil eraser, a piece of paper, etc.? Do you ever borrow little things of him and forget or neglect to return them?

(*b*) Can you be trusted *to keep order without being watched*? The rules of the school—you know them all, big and little—do you keep them, "on honor," and when you have a chance to break them without being caught? *Do you stand for the law and order* of the school? A rule-breaker is a law-breaker—is he any less mean when a boy in school than out in the city or country? Laws are made to restrain the *bad* people: good, honorable people *need no laws*. If you "break a law," with whom do you place yourself? If you oblige your teacher to *watch you*, do you not take a certain amount from her *teaching* force and compel her to put it into "police force?" She has just so much force to give to you—*may* it *all* be of the *best* kind?

(*c*) "*Honor in telling.*" Is it ever honorable to "tell" on another schoolmate who has done wrong? Constant tattling is mean; but if some one does or is doing that which harms another, or the school; or if the teacher appeals to the school for aid in finding out who has done some *very bad* thing, is it honorable to tell, or to keep silent? Which requires the most bravery? Is there a difference between tattling and "evidence?" What are courts of law for! To fer-

ret out and punish crime. Is one who gives evidence against a wrong doer, in a court, respected or despised? If he remains silent what does the court do? If you are silent about a school wrong, do you *protect* the wrong doer and thus *help* him? Do you owe honor to the *law-breaker* or to the law? Is it honor or is it cowardice that keeps you silent? Which is *mean*, *helping* or *righting* wrong?

(*d*) *Honor in lessons.*—Is there more than one opinion about anything else than the strictest honesty in learning, writing, or reciting lessons?

We have talked of common-places, little things; but is *honor* in little things ever *itself* a little thing?

(4) **For Older Classes.**—Can you have a *high* motive for sometimes cheating in lessons? such as to please your parents or teachers, to win a "scholarship" or "free tuition" which Father cannot afford to give you but which "will help *him* so much?" Shakespeare, in Hamlet, says, "Mine honor is my *life*; both grow in one;" and George Eliot says: "It seems to me, a loss which falls upon another *because we have done right* is not to lie upon our conscience." (*Middlemarch.*)

"Feelings come and go like light troops following the present; but *principles*, like troops of the line, are undisturbed and stand fast." *Richter.*

We hear much of the wickedness of sin: it were well if we heard more of its meanness.

X.

Prizes and Rewards.

"Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling."

"The aim of life—To seek the supreme wisdom by the reason and to practice the sovereign good by the will."—*Giordani Bruno.*

Choose and adapt.

(1) **A Prize**:—that which is offered or won as the reward of some exertion or contest."

Does *your* teacher give prizes? Did you ever win one? If fifty are contending for a prize, how many can win it? Do all of the rest get nothing?

(1) "**A Reward**:—that which is given in return for good or evil done or received; a recompense, a equital, a return." You have done well or ill in your school-work—let us see about your reward.

Reward comes from two words. *re*, which means *back*; and *warder*, which means *guard* or *keep*; so whatever you do, something comes *back* to *keep*. "A recompense:" there you have it again—*re*, back, and *compense*, from a word that means to *weigh one thing against another*. The worth of your lesson-work was weighed in the mind-balance and you get its worth back again. "A requital:"—the *re*, for back, and *quit*—you and your work "are quits," one gives and gets no more than the other. "Return:" there is your *re*, back, and turn which means *turn*—your school-work will turn back upon you as you sent it out from you. You

may not win the "prize," but will you get a reward?

(3) **Best Rewards.**—What are the great rewards of study? More knowledge? More power to acquire knowledge? Which is the better of these? Will you always have these if you study *well*? *Can* you *fail* to have them for good work? Honor, promotion, praise—will you have them, too? If you do, will you be glad? If you do not, have you still something worth the work you did? Can you acquire a *habit* of working well? Auerbach, in *On the Heights*, says. "Our second mother, *habit*, is also a good mother." We can *make* her a good mother, can we not? In school, she should "mother" punctuality, promptness, obedience, politeness and faithfulness in all all ways.

(4) **Motives.**—Does the *motive* make any difference in your work? If your motive is high—for self-improvement, to please your parents, to get the *good* out of school—can you fail to enjoy your work and make it good? If your motive is lower—for a prize, to get to be "head" of the class, to get high marks—will the work be worth as much to you *really*? If you *fail* to get these, do you not feel as if you had lost *all* you were striving for? Then make your *all* larger, so that if you do not "get the prize," are not "Number One," do not stand "100," you will still feel that you have most of it left.

(5) **For Older Classes.**—Prizes are offered for many things in these days—should the *mere offer* of a prize lead you to *try for it*? For instance, a paper offers a prize for the best *Christmas story* or *essay* on *Patriotism*—are there any questions to consider *before* you try for it? Can you spare the *time* from your school

work? your home work? your recreation hours? If you can, and send out your story or essay, will the *anxiety* of waiting for the result interfere with your school work? Prizes for subscribers for magazines, for base ball games, should you try for them without weighing the matter well? What does "pressing forward to the mark of a high calling," mean?

XI.

SELF-EDUCATION.

"He is best educated who sees most differences."

"A sound mind cannot exist where the morals are unsound. Sinister designs render the view of things oblique."—*Gouverneur Morris.*

Row with the oars that you have."—*Dutch Proverb*

Choose and adapt.

(1) Differences.—When you were a *little* child did the stars all *look alike*? the blades of grass? the leaves of a tree? Do they now? What has *made* the *difference*? A savage or an uneducated person likes the music of a hand organ or a street band better than that of a fine orchestra—does one who is educated in music? A *poor* picture and a *good* picture—how can we learn to *know* the *latter*? Good manners and bad

manners—can we know the difference without *education* in manners? In order to see *very slight* differences in things we have to observe closely, to have a *trained* eye and ear, and to study and learn about these things.

(2) **Keep Yourself Ready to Learn.**—The mind grows best when everything,—*body, brain* and *heart*—are *healthful*. How will you keep the body healthy? By work, play, good food, plenty of sleep, loose clothing, bathing and using the different parts of it aright. Over-work, under-work, poor work—do they harm the body? Must you *think* to find out the best way of taking care of it?

(*a*) *Train the hand.*—How do teachers begin to teach an idiot? As his hand becomes trained, his mind grows—is this true of your mind? If you train the hand to use tools, the pencil, pen, and needle, is any thing *beside the hand* trained? The more things you can *do* readily, well, quickly, delicately, the better trained are your faculties—your "getting along" faculties.

(*b*) *Train the eye—to see.* "Having eyes you see not"—what does that mean? Do you notice the common things about you? Can you tell of the growing things? of birds? of clouds? of houses and people? Take one good look into a store window as you pass quickly—how many of the objects in it can you name or describe? Do this once a day and see if you improve in a week's time. Can you measure lengths, heights, distances, by the eye? Can you see very small things?

(3) *School only a beginning.*—Teacher and books can only *start* you in your education. They help you

to help yourself. How much of time out of a school day *can* the teacher give you? What of the rest of the time? Can a school book tell you all you wish to know of a subject, or only *point the way* to larger knowledge? Perhaps you have an opportunity to *travel*, —*geography* and *history* have helped make you ready for it. You visit the country, or some mountainous region, or great river basin,—botany, geology, and chemistry have helped make you able to enjoy it. A good *school* education is a good *foundation*—can you build higher yourself?

(4) *Use of Books.*—Books should be used to set us thinking, to answer our "whys," to lead us to ask other "whys" about new things, and to teach us about better things than we have known. Should we always *believe* a thing "because the book says so?" If a statement appears unreasonable to us, should we believe it without *testing* and *investigating* it further? Let one book be a stepping-stone to others.

(5) **A Conscience in Self-education.**—We have in us the beginnings of knowledge and goodness, and we all have *some* means of growth—if we do not use them, are we wicked? If we "lose our opportunities" can we ever regain those *same* opportunities? or, ever *do as well* with like ones? Is self-education a duty to *ourselves*, only? Can we "grow in heart" as well as in mind? Good actions bring heart-growth. If we can not all have opportunities to grow wise, can we all grow good — *make ourselves* good?

"Perseverance is the best school for every manly virtue."

XII.

VACATION.

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

"She had a passion for turning a think into a thing."
George MacDonald.

Choose and adapt.

(1) **Preparation.**—First, have you *earned* a "good" vacation by good work? Then think over carefully what you *wish* to do; then, again, think over what of all this you *may* do; then, remember, honestly, what you *ought* to do. Out of the three lists you ought to make up a pretty "good" vacation. Nine weeks—it is a long time—will it take care of itself? Will *each day* take care of itself? Yes, in one sense; but can *you* take good care of each day, getting out of it the "good" that is in it? Plan, then, as carefully as you can, changing and re-shaping cheerfully as circumstances compel you, but do not be aimless, and do not let what should have been your "fore-thought," become your "hind-thought."

(2) **Going Away**.—Have you an opportunity to go from home for your vacation? Good; for travel and change of scene educate us.

(*a*) *Do you go into the country*? Go with eyes and ars open. Study the trees, flowers, insects, stones and country products, by observation, by asking intelligent questions, and by books with which you provided yourself before leaving home. Learn to

know the common things. It is a far better way of *resting* than lolling in a hammock or under a tree *all* of the time. Share the country pleasures—*do* things. Because you came from the city do you *know more* than the *country* boys and girls? Of city things, yes. Of country things, a knowledge of which is just as valuable, they are far wiser than you. *Learn* of them, and in your turn teach, modestly, what they wish to know.

(*b*) *Do you go into the city?* Then take every opportunity to visit its places of historical interest, its art galleries, its manufactories, its public buildings. Ride to the end of every street car line that you may. What are shop windows for? Is it "countrified" to look into them? Indeed it is not. A careful study of shop windows teaches much. How should you behave in a city? No one knows you, shall you then "do as you please," disregard rules or be disorderly? Is that your idea of "having a good time?"

(3) **Staying at Home.**—If your home is in the *city* can you treat it as a *strange* city? Have you visited all its public buildings, manufactories, art galleries, parks and wharves? Now is a good time to do so.

If your home is in the *country* have you ever made a collection of the leaves in your neighborhood? of stones or flowers, and learned all you can of them? Have you ever tried preparing grasses, flowers, grains, cones and such abundant things for gifts to city friends? They are very welcome. Have you ever collected insects, beetles, larvæ of all kinds, put them into boxes with air-holes, and the kind of food you have found them eating, and watched their development? It is very fascinating.

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